

Claims

1. A method for installing and launching a network application, through a distributed network, the application contained on a server, the method comprising:

accessing the server through the network;

5 selecting parameters of the application;

determining if the latest version of the application is present on a client;

downloading and installing an archive file containing the latest version of the application if the latest version of the application is not present on the client;

launching the application; and

10 passing parameters to a port, the port in communication with the application, wherein the application is configured to access native libraries of the archive file.

2. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein passing parameters to a port further includes:

15 configuring the application to listen to the port; and

sending the parameters over the port, the parameters being sent by a control module.

3. The method as recited in claim 2, wherein the port is a TCP/IP port.

20 4. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the application is a Java application, the Java application configured to be executed by a Java virtual machine of an operating system of the client.

5. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the archive file is a .cab file, the .cab
25 file including the application and a control module.

6. The method as recited in claim 5, wherein the application is a Java application and the .cab file includes native libraries, the native libraries configured to standardize an output of the Java application across platforms.

5 7. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein selecting parameters of the application further includes:

linking to an HTML page the HTML page including an object containing version information of an archive file.

10 8. The method as recited in claim 7, wherein the object includes the width and height of a window of a web browser where the application appears.

9. A method for running a network program on a client, the network program accessed through a web browser, the method comprising:

15 accessing the server containing the network program;

configuring parameters of the application;

linking to a page on the server, the page containing version information of a server archive file;

determining if a client archive file is present on the client, the determining further
20 including;

inspecting the client archive file if the client archive file is present to ascertain if the client archive file is the same version as the server archive file; and

downloading the server archive file to the client if the client archive file is not present or if the client archive file is not the same version as the server archive file; and

25 launching the program.

10. The method as recited in claim 9, wherein the network program is a Java based program for a printing application.

11. The method as recited in claim 9 further including:

5 passing the parameters to a port;

executing the application, the executing further including,

accessing native libraries, the native libraries installed by the archive file.

12. The method as recited in claim 11, wherein the port is a TCP/IP port and the application is configured to listen to the TCP/IP port so that the application can receive the parameters passed to the port.

13. The method as recited in claim 9, wherein the archive file is a .cab file, the .cab file containing a control module, the control module configured to pass the parameters to a port.

14. The method as recited in claim 13, wherein the control module is further configured to be digitally signed.

15. A system for installing and launching an application through a network, the system comprising:

a server, the server including an application contained in a server archive file, the application including a plurality of options, the server configured to link to a page containing version information of the server archive file, the server further configured to allow a user to select the options of the application;

25 a web browser, and

a client, the client in communication with the server through the web browser, the client inspected by the server to determine if a client archive file is present and current by comparing the version information of the server archive file with version information of the client archive file, wherein if the client archive file is not present or not current, the server archive file is downloaded to the client, the client archive file including the application, the application further configured to listen to a port such that any of the options selected by a user are transmitted to the application by a control module through the port.

16. The system as recited in claim 15, wherein the client and server archive files are .cab files, the .cab files including .INF files, the .INF files including a launcher application containing the control module.

17. The system as recited in claim 15, wherein the application is a Java application containing printing functionality.

18. The system as recited in claim 17, wherein the Java application uses a Java virtual machine of an operating system of the client.

19. The system as recited in claim 17, wherein the printing functionality is regulated by native libraries, the native libraries included in the client archive file.

20. A computer readable media containing program instructions for installing and launching a network application, through a distributed network, the application contained on a server, the computer readable media comprising:

program instructions for accessing the server through the network;

program instructions for selecting parameters of the application;

program instructions for determining if the latest version of the application is present on a client;

program instructions for downloading and installing an archive file containing the latest version of the application if the latest version of the application is not present on the client;

5 program instructions for launching the application; and

program instructions for passing parameters to a port, the port in communication with the application, wherein the application is configured to access native libraries of the archive file.

21. The computer readable media as recited in claim 20, wherein the program
10 instructions for passing parameters to a port further includes:

program instructions for configuring the application to listen to the port; and

program instructions for sending the parameters over the port, the parameters being sent by a control module.

15 22. The computer readable media as recited in claim 20, wherein the port is a TCP/IP port.

23. The computer readable media as recited in claim 20, wherein the application is a Java application, the Java application configured to be executed by a Java virtual machine of an
20 operating system of the client.

24. The computer readable media as recited in claim 20, wherein the program instructions for selecting parameters of the application further includes:

program instructions for linking to an HTML page the HTML page including an object
25 containing version information of an archive file.